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APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: DEC 2003

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Director of
Central
Intelligence

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NFB NIE 72 3-92

Mozambique: Political Settlement in Sight This Year, but Outside Engagement Needed

National Intelligence Estimate

*This National Intelligence Estimate represents
the views of the Director of Central Intelligence
with the advice and assistance of the
US Intelligence Community.*

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NIE 72.3-92
February 1992

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*Information available as of 27 February 1992 was used
in the preparation of this National Intelligence Estimate.*

*The following intelligence organizations participated
in the preparation of this Estimate:*
The Central Intelligence Agency
The Defense Intelligence Agency
The National Security Agency
The Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research,
Department of State

also participating:
The Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence,
Department of the Army
The Director of Naval Intelligence,
Department of the Navy
The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence,
Department of the Air Force

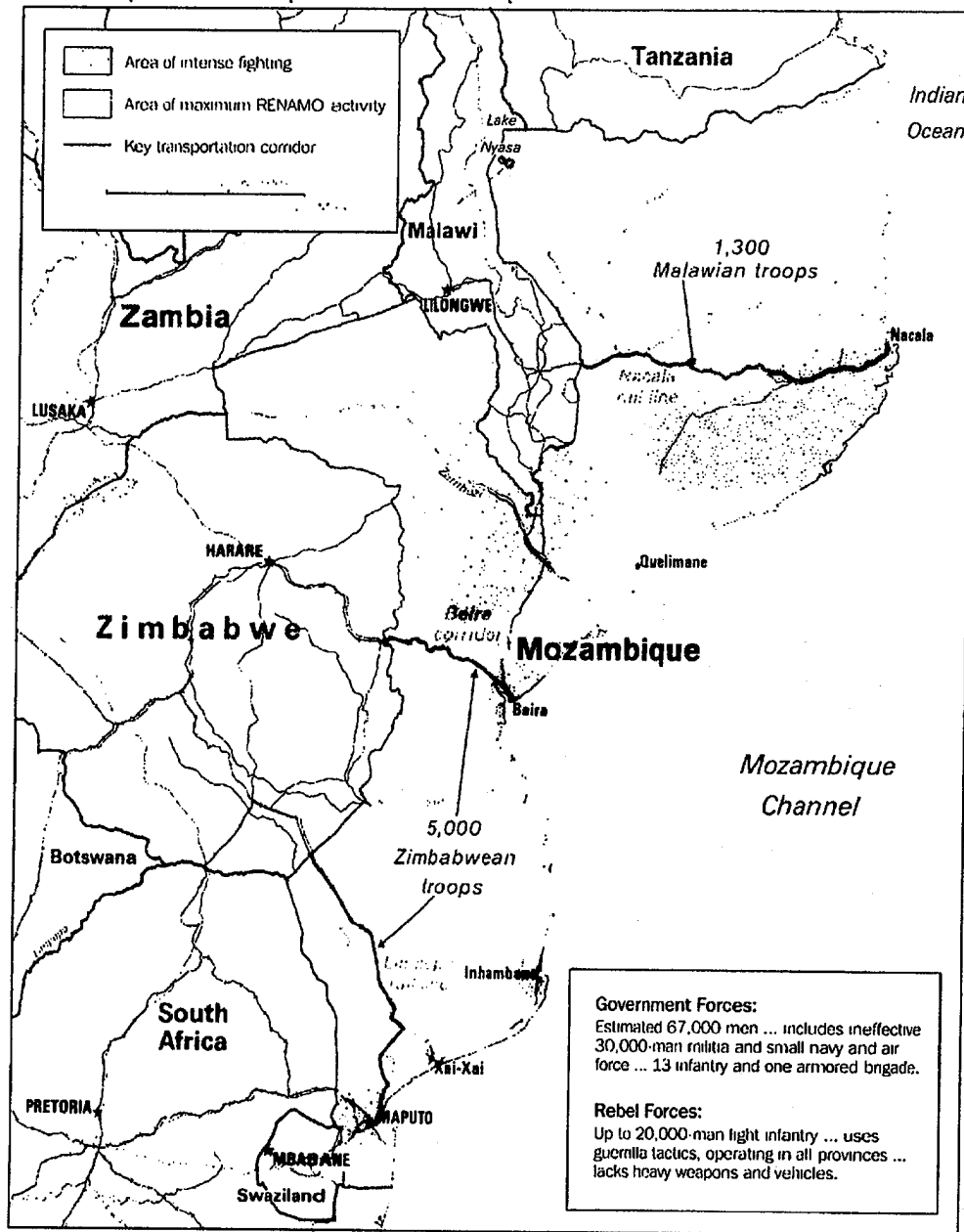
*This Estimate was approved for publication by the
National Foreign Intelligence Board.*

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February 1992

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Figure 1
The Military Balance and Key Areas of Rebel Activity

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Key Judgments

Mozambique: Political Settlement in Sight This Year, but Outside Engagement Needed ☐

Mozambique's Government and the RENAMO insurgents will probably agree this year to a cease-fire and elections, culminating talks that began in mid-1990. Success would end Africa's last holdover from the Cold War in which former Marxist governments were challenged by rural rebellions. To keep the peace process on track, external involvement will be necessary—particularly by the United States, which enjoys unique credibility with both sides. ☐

But implementation of a settlement will be rocky, and cease-fire violations, an upsurge of brigandage, and delays in holding elections are very likely. An end to fighting in Mozambique would improve economic prospects in neighboring countries, while failure to settle or a poorly implemented cease-fire would further destabilize the region, including South Africa. ☐

Growing Pressures To Settle

Fatigued by 15 years of fighting and weakened by the loss of support from the former Soviet Bloc, the government wants an end to a war it knows it cannot win. President Chissano wants an accommodation in order to:

- Clear the way for national elections and legitimize his program of political reform.
- Address Mozambique's economic crisis.
- Maintain the flow of international economic aid. ☐

RENAMO, on the other hand, is less motivated to settle. Rebel leader Dhlakama has made little progress in building an organization capable of electoral campaigning or in convincing the hardliners among his commanders that ending a conflict they can continue almost indefinitely would be in their interest. Nonetheless, war weariness, declining external support to RENAMO, and Dhlakama's need for legitimacy at home and abroad are important incentives to cooperate. ☐

Outsiders Required

Negotiations will progress fitfully and require sustained international mediation because distrust and differences between the two sides remain substantial. Moreover, greater outside engagement, especially with

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February 1992

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RENAMO, could increase the incentive to compromise and reduce the temptation on both sides to continue fighting in last-ditch efforts to influence talks. ☐

What Could Go Wrong . . . or Speed Up Talks?

The chances of talks collapsing completely are low, but intensified RENAMO pessimism over its electoral prospects, Dhlakama's death, or military or popular opposition to Chissano could temporarily derail them. ☐

There is some possibility the peace process could accelerate, particularly if international support for free and fair elections and outside monitoring of the cease-fire is assured. Building Dhlakama's confidence in his personal safety and RENAMO's status as a political party would also speed the talks. ☐

Postsettlement Difficulties

Any cease-fire is likely to be ragged and conditions in the countryside will deteriorate even further. For example:

- Delays in forming a joint army and demobilizing excess forces will result in clashes and banditry.
- RENAMO splinter groups and other armed factions may challenge the cease-fire.
- Haggling over electoral issues left unresolved in the negotiations will probably delay holding elections. ☐

The United States Counts

US reactions carry weight with both parties and the Italian-supported Catholic Church mediators. All want the United States to play a more active role. We believe US involvement would help advance the talks and enhance US credibility in the region, including South Africa. Other countries vying to play a bigger role in the talks—notably Portugal—do not enjoy the trust of all parties and pursue separate agendas. ☐

Once a peace agreement is signed, the Mozambicans will count heavily on the United States and other Western donors to help implement the agreement, reorganize and demobilize the military, rebuild a devastated economy, and resettle millions of displaced people and refugees. ☐

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Discussion¹

Mozambique's Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) Government and the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) rebels appear increasingly committed to the peace process begun in July 1990 by Italian-supported Catholic Church mediators. Distrust that plagued the early stages of talks is slowly dissipating as a result of dialogue and the relative success of a cease-fire along Mozambique's key transportation corridors. Moreover, the talks in Rome have served as a political training ground for RENAMO and helped the rebels define their political agenda. In our judgment, with sustained outside involvement, an accord can be reached this year. ☐

A War of No Returns

After 15 years of fighting, FRELIMO and RENAMO have reached a bloody and costly impasse. Both sides are stretched thin and are tired. Moreover, foreign support is dwindling for both, and neither has nor is likely to gain the wherewithal to win. ☐

We believe this stalemate will continue to push both sides toward a negotiated settlement. For the government, the war will be a holding action at best. Most Army units—poorly trained and led—will continue to maintain ineffective static defensive positions and spend more time foraging for food than fighting RENAMO. Even so, the government will retain control of most provincial capitals and many larger towns. With help from neighboring Zimbabwe and Malawi, the transportation corridors linking inland areas to key ports will remain open. ☐

RENAMO will continue to suffer from inadequate supplies, and it will be unable to conduct the sustained, large-scale operations necessary to gain a decisive military advantage. The insurgents can operate in most of the countryside, however, and are

capable of destabilizing the government indefinitely. As long as there is no settlement, RENAMO will continue to highlight the government's inability to protect the population and will harass urban centers and conduct terrorist attacks. ☐

Political Pressures for Settlement

On the Government. A settlement would clear the way for national elections, which President Chissano wants in order to cap the political reform process he began in 1986. Chissano's program provides for multiple political parties and regular elections and has undercut the domestic and international appeal of RENAMO's vague pro-Western platform. Chissano believes he can count on this success and FRELIMO's organization and resources to overcome the government's unpopularity in the countryside, due to its former Marxist policies, domination by urban southerners, and abuses by the military. ☐

Chissano also recognizes that market-based reforms can have little impact on Mozambique's economic crisis until the fighting stops. Until then, the insurgency will draw resources away from Mozambique's ravaged industrial, agricultural, and transportation sectors. In addition, poor security will discourage foreign investment, and the government will remain dependent on Western donors and repeated reschedulings of foreign debt. Finally, Chissano recognizes that international donors are unlikely to continue pouring in economic aid if prospects for peace recede. ☐

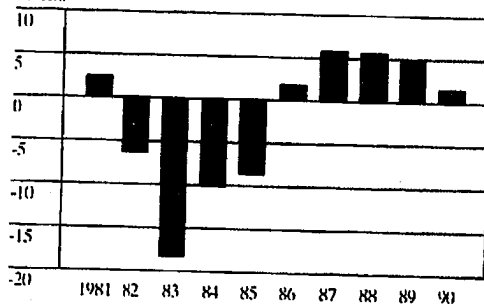
On RENAMO. In contrast, RENAMO has weaker political motivations to seek a settlement. Dhlakama no doubt recognizes FRELIMO's political advantages and the difficulties he will face in building a political organization capable of winning an election. Moreover, he has yet to convince RENAMO commanders

¹ This Estimate was requested by the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs to assess prospects for a negotiated end to Mozambique's civil war; its time frame is one year. ☐

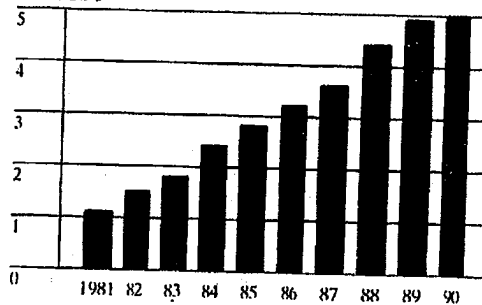
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Figure 2
Mozambique: Key Economic Indicators

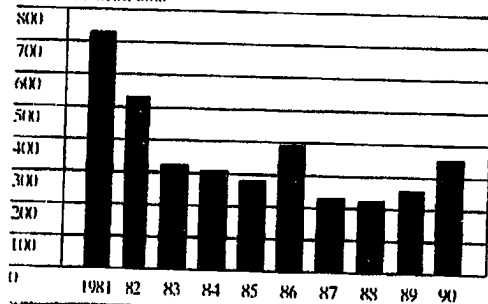
GNP Growth
Percent



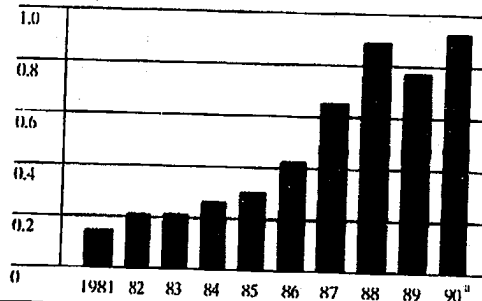
Foreign Debt
Billion US \$



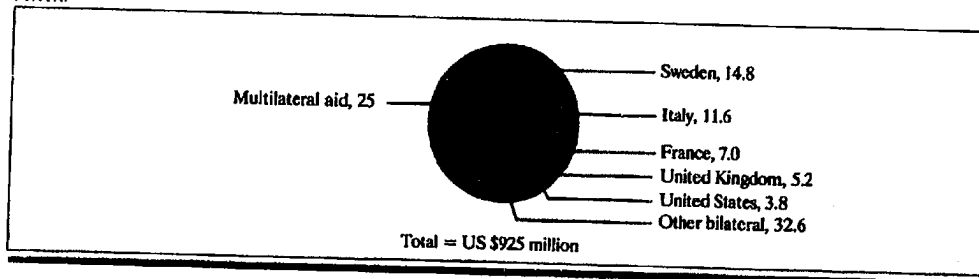
Export Crops
Thousand metric tons



Official Development Assistance Disbursed
Billion US \$



Official Development Assistance Disbursed, 1990 ^a
Percent



^aEstimated.

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Declining Military Support for Both Sides

Government

Zimbabwe: Plans to cut by one-third its force guarding key corridors.

Malawi: Approximately 1,300 troops on the Nacala Railway.

Libya: The less than \$1 million per year in arms, ammunition, and training is likely to be reduced.

Former East Bloc: Once primary supplier; government now makes only occasional cash purchases, has less than 40 Russian and Cuban advisers.

Western Europe: France and Portugal provide small training missions and less than \$1 million each in equipment; British will phase down training program.

RENAMO

Internal: Extorts most logistic support from the population and commercial interests; captures most of its weapons from government troops and acquires some on the black market.

South Africa: Significantly reduced deliveries in 1985 and probably again in 1991, but we believe continues limited support.

Kenya: Funnel for movement of personnel, funds, and supplies.

Malawi: Safehaven, transit point; makes pay-offs for security of the Nacala Railway.

Portugal: Limited financial support; may eventually provide training.

Private groups: Disaffected Portuguese in South Africa and Portugal, as well as various right-wing groups in the United States and Europe, provide funding and access to arms markets.

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to abandon a military conflict that has provided a relatively secure livelihood. Few have the skills or wealth to ease successfully into civilian life, and some may also cling to the belief they can cause the government to collapse. ☐

Nonetheless, we believe that Dhlakama recognizes that he must negotiate to enhance his international legitimacy. We think, for example, that a successful tour of Europe in late 1991 was partially responsible for subsequent progress in the talks. Dhlakama also no doubt knows he needs peace to broaden RENAMO's appeal in Mozambique, especially in urban areas and in the extreme north and south, where rebels have little ethnic affinity and their atrocities have alienated the population. ☐

A Settlement This Year, but ...

On balance, we believe Dhlakama will overcome his reluctance to risk elections in order to build legitimacy at home and abroad. International guarantees of free and fair elections and monitoring of a cease-fire will be needed to bring him along, however. ☐

Jockeying on the battlefield could interrupt the momentum of the talks from time to time, but we expect the two sides to sign protocols establishing guidelines for elections, a general cease-fire, and international monitoring and guarantees. Resolution of many controversial issues is likely to be postponed to the implementation phase. ☐

... Rocky Implementation

The Cease-Fire. Implementation will be difficult, and cease-fire violations by both sides are probable:

- Logistic difficulties and lack of discipline on both sides will delay demobilization and formation of a new army.
- Many troops will not report to assembly points for demobilization, and those who do may leave for electioneering or banditry, particularly if arrangements for feeding and preparing them for civilian life prove inadequate.

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~~Secret~~**Key Positions Contrasted**

The government and RENAMO have agreed on negotiating guidelines and some ground rules for party organizing and elections. Nonetheless, several contentious issues separate them:

Issue	FRELIMO	RENAMO
Legitimacy	Maximum administrative control over implementing elections.	Participation in overseeing elections; minimal role for third parties.
Military integration	Minimal RENAMO share.	Equal footing between the two sides.
International involvement	Limited outside presence in monitoring cease-fire and elections.	Extensive foreign and UN participation in implementing accords.

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- Smaller armed groups—such as breakaway RENAMO units or the private armies loosely allied with the government—may challenge the cease-fire. ☐

Elections. The poor security conditions and haggling over issues left unresolved in Rome will probably delay national elections, and they will require strong international support to get off the ground. When electioneering begins, cease-fire violations may increase as FRELIMO uses government forces to intimidate voters and candidates and RENAMO tries to prevent government campaigning in insurgent-dominated areas. ☐

Although the two sides have already agreed to hold elections no more than one year after a general cease-fire, setting the exact date for elections may prove difficult. RENAMO will want time to organize, while the government will want a shorter timetable to take advantage of its incumbency. ☐

Alternative Scenarios

What Could Go Wrong? In our view, the chances of talks collapsing completely are slim because the domestic and international pressures that led the two

sides to the table will continue to intensify throughout the year. Nonetheless, the process could be slowed or temporarily derailed if:

- RENAMO pessimism over its electoral prospects increases and Dhlakama decides on more military action.
- Dhlakama dies or is assassinated and a disruptive leadership struggle ensues.
- Chissano faces significant popular opposition or coup plotting from officers opposing concessions to RENAMO. A coup plot was uncovered last year.
- Rivalries among key outside actors heighten and they work at cross purposes. ☐

What Could Speed Up a Settlement? The peace process could move faster if:

- Dhlakama receives assurances from his external supporters of sufficient financial and advisory backing to guarantee RENAMO a strong political position after the cease-fire.
- RENAMO leaders feel confident about their personal security in a postwar Mozambique.
- The government is pressured by threats of imminent withdrawal of allied Zimbabwean forces. ☐

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~~Secret~~**Implications for the United States and the West**

Helping to resolve the conflict in Mozambique would increase US influence and credibility elsewhere in the region, including South Africa. US reactions to the Mozambican negotiating process carry a great deal of weight with both parties and with the mediators, in part, because they view the United States as the single outside power able to guarantee implementation of a fair settlement. Dhlakama's desire to visit the United States will act as an added stimulus to show flexibility in talks. []

Other countries vying to play a bigger role in the talks— []

[]—pursue separate agendas and are not trusted by all parties, thus limiting their ability to influence the process positively. At later stages, however, bringing in these states as observers or advisers could prevent them from muddying the waters, secure added expertise for the more technical phases of talks, and pave the way for international financial support. []

Once a peace agreement is signed, both sides will count heavily on the United States and other Western nations to help implement the cease-fire and conduct elections. They will also ask the UN for assistance. []

Moreover, Mozambique will expect Western aid to help it rebuild its economy and to resettle some 2.5 million displaced people and refugees. The United States, because of its leading role in support of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, will be asked to underwrite much of the cost of repatriation and reintegration. Development aid for devastated rural areas will be crucial to reduce brigandage. []

Improved security conditions would eventually create opportunities for foreign investment in infrastructure rehabilitation, agriculture, and oil refining. Safer southern African transportation routes would also vastly improve prospects for regional economic development. Consequently, we expect South Africa to play a key role in the reconstruction effort. []

On the other hand, an aborted settlement or a poorly implemented cease-fire would prompt greater flows of refugees and arms from Mozambique and add to economic burdens and destabilizing pressures in neighboring countries, including South Africa. []

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